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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LAGOS 000039

SIPDIS

STATE PASS DOE FOR DAS JBRODMAN AND CGAY
TREASURY FOR ASEVERENS AND SRENENDER
COMMERCE FOR KBURRESS
STATE PASS TRANSPORTATION FOR MARAD
STATE PASS OPIC FOR ZHAN AND MSTUCKART
STATE PASS TDA FOR NCABOT
STATE PASS EXIM FOR JRICHTER
STATE PASS USTR FOR ASST USTR SLISER
STATE PASS USAID FOR GWEYNAND AND SLAWAETZ

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/20/2015
TAGS: [EPET](#) [PGOV](#) [ASEC](#) [PTER](#) [KHLs](#) [PINR](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: SHELL HOSTAGE SITUATION UPDATE

REF: A. LAGOS 27
[1](#)B. 2005 LAGOS 1942

Classified By: Acting Consul General William Howe for Reasons 1.4 (D & E)

Summary

[1](#)1. (C) The State Security Service (SSS) reportedly told the Shell External Affairs Director in Warri that they had interviewed two suspects in the kidnapping of four expat contractors from the vessel Liberty Service. Both appeared to be associated with Dokubo Asari's Niger Delta Peoples' Volunteer Force (NDPVF), a militant group operating in Bayelsa State.

[1](#)2. (U) Liberty Service crew members reported Amcit Patrick Landry appeared to be unhurt in the kidnapping.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Shell has restored production at 50 per cent capacity on its East Area (EA) field. The company estimates a ten-day clean up operation for the pipeline damaged in the attack prior to the kidnapping and confirmed a 106,000 barrel per day (BPD) loss in production in the interim. End Summary.

Tidex Contacts Relatives of Captive American Citizen

[1](#)4. (SBU) The crew of the Liberty Service, which arrived at 1430 on January 12 to the Onnie port near Port Harcourt, confirmed that Tidex employee and Amcit Patrick Landry (DPOB 23-Mar-1932, St. Morten Parish, LA) was unhurt during the attack and walked off the boat with his captors. As of 2200 January 12, Tidex General Manager had contacted Landry's wife in the U.S. and his son. He shared that the family was distraught and upset that more information is not available.

Two People May Lead Authorities to Kidnappers

[1](#)5. (C) Willie Akolu, Shell External Affairs Director in Warri, reported the SSS had spoken with two men, Government Etempolo and Chief Iduwelli, in connection with the kidnapping. He said the prevailing opinion was that a splinter group of Dokubo Asari's Niger Delta Peoples' Volunteer Force (NDPVF), called the Niger Delta Coalition, was responsible.

Shell Believes Latest Spate of Attacks Connected

[1](#)6. (SBU) As of 10:00 January 13, Shell Emergency Response Team had linked the January 11 pipeline explosion and hijacking to the same group of approximately 40 people travelling in "three canoes." The pipeline was located near the Brass Creek Manifold in Bayelsa State and provided an estimated 106,000 BPD production to Shell's Forcados Terminal.

[1](#)7. (C) Shell would like to link not only these attacks, but also the Opobo pipeline attack reported ref B and previously unreported attacks on Exxon Mobil's Yoho platform, currently under construction. Paul Barker, a Chevron security official, said the Yoho platform was boarded and everyone held at gunpoint for two days, but Exxon officials claim that they had two small-scale strikes at the platform site, causing work stoppages of a few days maximum. Local workers at the site are still not working, and a protracted dispute may cause an impact on oil production.

[1](#)8. (SBU) The Bayelsa State Government, the GON, and Shell have formed a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) comprising

officials of the Department of Petroleum Resources, Federal Ministry of Environment, Bayelsa State Ministry of Environment, the Nigerian Police Force, Shell, and members of the 9 EA communities. The team met in Bayelsa on January 12, and Delta State is forming another JIT to meet on January 13. Shell and Tidex officials expressed some frustration with the lack of immediate progress by GON security services investigating the kidnappings.

Shell Resumes Some Production, Force Majeure Declared

19. (SBU) Shell reported resumption of 60,000 bpd production at their East Area field shut down ref A. Shell promised to resume full production once a clear GON naval presence was at the site. As of 12:01 January 13, however, they had declared force majeure, less than a week after lifting their previous declaration, because of continued loss at the EA field and the 106,000 bpd loss recorded at Forcados. Shell estimates 10 days for the repair of their pipeline.

Comment

110. (SBU) With Dokubo Asari still incarcerated in Abuja, the leadership of dispossessed and frustrated Ijaws appears to have transferred to splinter factions of Asari's NDPVF. If, however, oil company officials are correct in linking the attacks and identifying a single group with the organizational capacity and arsenal to conduct multiple and highly effective attacks, the GON may be hard pressed to return stability to the region. End Comment.
HOWE